さくらDISCORD

EIJI MASUDA PRESENTS

増田英二

5

SHONEN GAHOSHA COMICS

週刊少年チャンピオン掲載
SHONEN CHAMPION COMICS
さくら
DISCORD
5
増田英二

さくらDISCORD

STORY&CHARACTER

桜ヶ丘亮
通称 丘

本ばかり読んでいる頭脳明晰だが、超一流の運動音痴。
正面から想いを伝えることで、虚無に捕われた芽吹を解き放った

桜島結太
通称 島

嫉妬や劣等感からうんなに嘘をついていたが、康介と正面から衝突することで、自分の弱さに打ち勝った
夏合宿でノ宮に告白したが玉砕

作楽康介
通称 康介

4年ぶりに帰ってきた故郷で幼なじみのノ宮、島、丘と再会した
実現できなかった中学野球での『一勝』に捕われているノ宮を意識しているが!?

芽吹さくら
通称 芽吹

家族関係に悩み、虚無に捕われていたが、仲間に誘う『さくら』たちの剥き出しの想いと丘の告白により6人目の『さくら』となった。

住吉さくら
通称 住吉

母親と弟の面倒を看ながらの生活で卑屈になっていたが、途に仲間に誘うノ宮に心を開いた。
康介に好意をよせている。

桜ノ宮さくら
通称 ノ宮

いつも笑顔でみんなを照らす、元気娘。真っ直ぐな康介を見て、自分を取り戻し、勇気をだして住吉との友情を確認した。
康介に惹かれているが!?

桜ハルカ

修一の双子の妹。
面倒見がいいが自由で肉食系。

桜修一

康介が世話になった、中学時代の野球部の先輩。

前巻のあらすじ

恋の予感渦巻く夏合宿で待ち受けていた康介の中学時代の先輩、桜修一と桜ハルカ。二人を加え混沌とする恋愛事情の中、島はノ宮に告白するも玉砕。一人合宿を離脱してしまう。勇気ある島の告白に力をもらい、ノ宮は意中の康介との関係が気になるハルカと対峙。そこで康介の辛い過去を知り!?

さくらDISCORD

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初出 週刊少年チャンピオン 2012No.25～No.34掲載。

＊この作品はフィクションであり、実在の個人・団体等にはいっさい関係ありません。

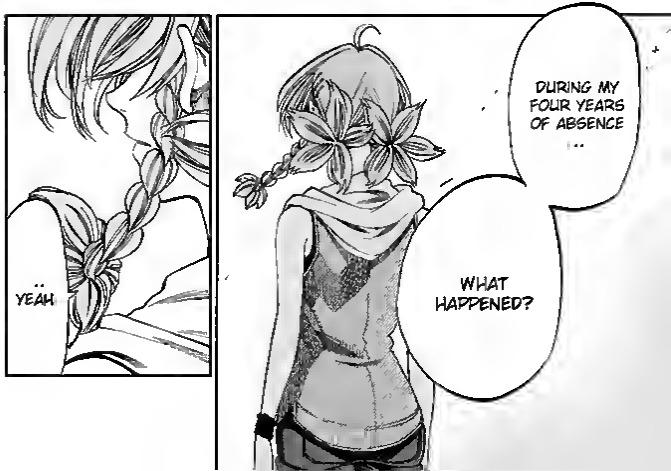
«I WANT TO CHANGE.»

«I DON'T WANT TO CHANGE»

CHAPTER 35 TIME

I GUESS WE HAVE SUCH IDEAS IN MIND...
PRECISELY BECAUSE
WE ARE UNABLE TO MOVE ON.

NOMIYA
I ALREADY ASKED YOU BEFORE, BUT...
LET ME ASK YOU AGAIN.


DURING MY FOUR YEARS OF ABSENCE...
WHAT HAPPENED?
...YEAH.

CHAPTER 35: TIME

...IT WAS AN ACCIDENT.
IT HAPPENED SOON AFTER YOU LEFT...
SO IT'S GONNA BE FOUR YEARS, NOW...
FORGIVE ME
YOU SENT ME A LETTER RIGHT AFTER MOVING...
BUT I JUST COULDN'T ANSWER IT.
GH...
SHIMA AND OKA DIDN'T
WAIT, DO THE OTHERS EVEN KNOW ABOUT IT...?
HMM, I THINK ONLY BUKKI KNOWS?
Silence she stared at my face for a while.
THAT'S NOT REALLY THE KIND OF NEWS YOU JUST TELL AROUND.

....OF COURSE I DIDN'T WANT TO SEE EVERY-ONE PITYING ME
BUT I THINK WHAT SCARED ME THE MOST...
WAS THAT IT WOULD MAKE ME FULLY REALIZE THAT I WOULDN'T SEE MOM AND DAD AGAIN
AND BECAUSE OF THAT, I SELFISHLY TOLD GRANPA AND GRANDMA
THAT I WOULD CONTINUE TO LIVE ALONE IN THAT APPARTMENT COMPLEX
BUT MY LONELINESS WAS VERY REAL, AND I DIDN'T LIKE
GOING BACK EVERY DAY TO A HOUSE WHERE NO-BODY WAS WAITING FOR ME

...THAT'S WHY, FOR FOUR YEARS...
YOU KEPT SKIPPING STONES ALONE...?
YEAH.
...THINKING BACK ON IT I GUESS
I WAS JUST WAITING FOR KOU-CHAN THE WHOLE TIME.
I FELT LIKE, IF HE CAME BACK TO THE TOWN,
THE DAYS WHERE MY PARENTS WERE THERE WOULD ALSO RETURN.

WHEN KOU-CHAN CAME BACK TO US...
THAT'S WHY, ON THAT DAY OF SPRING...
BUT DOUBTED MY OWN EYES.
I LOOKED AT HIS BACK..
AND REALIZED IT WASN'T A DREAM.
YOU SUCK, DUDE!
WHAT? TIRED ALREADY?
AND THEN I SAW HIS FACE...
THEN WE'RE GONNA BE RACING TO SCHOOL, ALRIGHT?
AH!
WAIT! HOLD THE FUCK UP!

SO I DESPE-
RATELY RAN
JUST TO HIDE
MY TEARS.

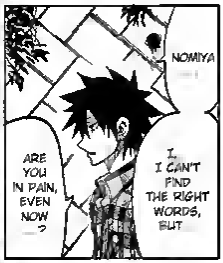
HEY, BUKKI
HAD YOU NOTICED?
EVEN IF WE GOT MARRIED ONE DAY,
WE WOULD ALL KEEP OUR "SAKURA"!
AH... NOW THAT YOU SAY IT...
YOU'RE RIGHT.
Sakurasaka Sakura. Err, the hell am I thinking.
...WE'RE ALL "SAKURA",
WE HAVE THE SAME NAME...
WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT...

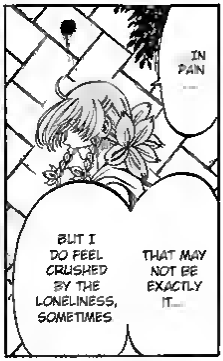
IT'S LIKE WE'RE A FAMILY, ISN'T IT?

I WAS ECSTATIC WHEN THE SIX "SAKURA" WERE GATHERED
THE OLD TIMES DIDN'T EXACTLY COME BACK OR WERE REPLACED
BUT IT WAS LIKE WE'D BE ABLE TO FIND THEM AGAIN.

I ALREADY KNOW, DEEP INSIDE,
THAT WE CAN'T REMAIN CHILDREN FOREVER.
THAT WE HAVE TO GROW UP, EVENTUALLY.
TIME ITSELF SCARES ME.
HONESTLY ...
TO ADMIT THAT THESE DAYS WOULD END, EVENTUALLY
HOWEVER, RIGHT AFTER THAT, I BECAME AFRAID
THEY WON'T COME BACK NO MATTER WHAT AND TIME WON'T STOP EITHER.
IT JUST MOVES FORWARD, ONE SECOND AT A TIME.

SOMEDAY, IT WILL PROBABLY HEAL BY ITSELF...
BUT I DOUBT I CAN EVER FORGET ABOUT IT


NOMIYA...
I, I CAN'T FIND THE RIGHT WORDS, BUT
ARE YOU IN PAIN, EVEN NOW...?


IN PAIN...
THAT MAY NOT BE EXACTLY IT...
BUT I DO FEEL CRUSHED BY THE LONELINESS, SOMETIMES

AND THAT'S..
THE SAME FOR YOU, AM I WRONG...?

THERE ARE THINGS WE WANT TO REMEMBER BUT FORGET...
AND THINGS WE'D LIKE TO FORGET, BUT JUST CAN'T.
THINGS CAN REMAIN THE SAME WHEN YOU WANT THEM TO CHANGE...
AND CHANGE WHEN YOU DON'T WANT THEM TO.
AND I HAVE NO REASON TO BLAME MYSELF
?
KOU-CHAN?
THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO...
I KNOW THAT ALL TOO WELL.
Hhh
. . .

SHIT, SO WHAT IF I CAN'T FORGET ABOUT IT?!
DO YOU THINK I CAN SETTLE THAT STUFF THAT EASILY?! GODDAMMIT!!
HUH?
WHAT?!
KO KOU-CHAN?!
NOMIYA, YOU'RE ABSO-LUTELY RIGHT
WE CAN'T REMAIN KIDS FO-REVER
THERE ARE THINGS WE JUST HAVE TO ACCEPT
TO BECOME ADULTS, ONE DAY

YEAH...
I GET THAT, ALREADY.
SO THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH COMPLAINING A LITTLE, RIGHT?
...SURE
WHY THE HELL NOT...

I GET IT, YEAH.
AND I'M SURE EVERYONE DOES.
WHAT'S WRONG WITH ANGSTING PATHETICALLY?!
WE DON'T BECOME ADULTS WITH A SNAP OF OUR FINGERS!!
YEAH, TIME DOESN'T STOP AND DOESN'T TURN BACK, WE GET IT!!
I CAN STILL DREAM ABOUT IT A LITTLE, CAN'T I?!
THERE ARE TIMES WHERE WE'RE SIMPLY POWERLESS.
But we still give it our all!
WHAT'S RIGHT OR WRONG, WHAT WE SHOULD DO...
WE ARE WELL AWARE OF IT.
SO, JUST THIS ONCE...

WE HAVE THE RIGHT TO COMPLAIN, DON'T WE?
AFTER WE'VE GOTTEN THAT OFF OUR CHESTS,
WE'LL DEFINITELY MOVE FORWARD, PROMISE.
STUPID KOU-CHAN!!
EH?
WHY ME?!

"Tell me more about the baseball club!!"
"Come on, Shuu!"
While I always attended the training.
So when we had activities, Haruka stayed by his side
He loved my stories about the club

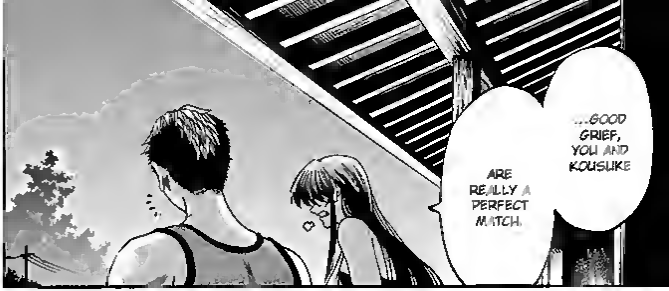
I have a funny story, today.
We just had a new recruit..
And guess what his name is?

CHAPTER 36:
WEAVE
"SAKURA KOUSUKE"!
IT'S WRITTEN DIFFERENTLY, BUT HIS NAME IS THE SAME AS YOURS...
KOUSUKE.

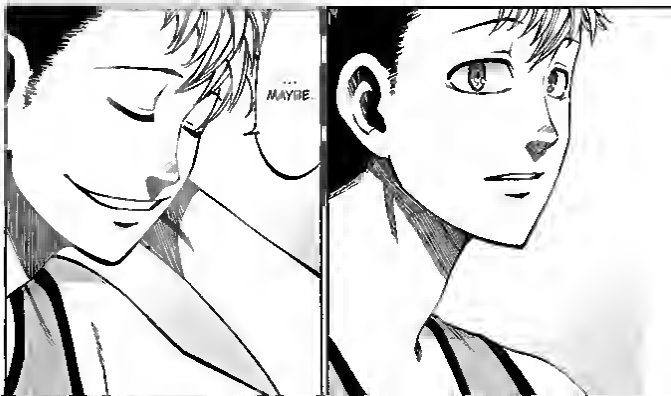
AS I THOUGHT...
KOUSUKE KNEW ABOUT HIM, HUH.
...THAT EXPLAINS A LOT.
I ALWAYS WONDERED WHY
HE WAS SO DESPERATE ABOUT THAT "ONE VICTORY"

IF OUR LOUSY CLUB WINS A SINGLE GAME,
THEN I'M SURE YOUR ILLNESS WILL BE CURED!!
THESE TWO JUST CAN'T HOLD THEIR TONGUE
I GUESS I HAVE KUROKI OR NAKATANI TO THANK FOR THAT
—I'M REALLY A POOR EXCUSE FOR A CAPTAIN
KOUSUKE EVEN HAD TO BEAR THAT BURDEN BECAUSE OF ME...

...IN THE END...
THE ONE WHO TOOK AWAY HIS LOVE FOR BASEBALL AND FOR OUR TRAININGS
WAS ME, WASN'T IT...
...DON'T BE SO FULL OF YOURSELF.
NO ONE HAS TO TAKE THE BLAME FOR ANYTHING.
ALL OF THAT IS BEHIND US, NOW.


...GOOD GRIEF, YOU AND KOUSUKE ARE REALLY A PERFECT MATCH.

ALWAYS DEAD SERIOUS ABOUT EVERYTHING,
AND ALWAYS BLAMING YOURSELF FOR EVERYTHING


...MAYBE.

THAT BASEBALL CLUB THAT YOU LOVED SO MUCH

NO LONGER EXISTS.

AAAH
I CAN NO LONGER FEEL MY THROAT...
I've been shouting all day
...ME EITHER
THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU SHOUT SO MUCH
OH WELL
IT STILL FEELS GOOD
TO COMPLAIN A LITTLE, RIGHT?
IN THE END...
WHAT'S HARDEST IS TO FULLY UNDERSTAND
WHERE THE PRO-BLEM LIES

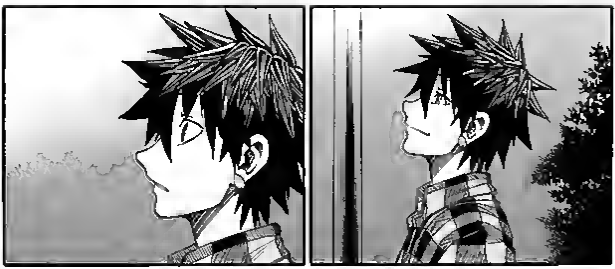
KOU-CHAN?
I MEAN, YOU HAVE TO FIGURE IT OUT
THE ISSUE ISN'T EVEN "FACING" OR "RUNNING AWAY"
IT'S THAT YOU MAY NOT KNOW YOURSELF AS MUCH AS YOU THOUGHT
YOU MAY BELIEVE YOU'VE GOTTEN OVER SOMETHING
WHEN ACTUALLY, YOU HAVEN'T
WHAT IS THE WALL STANDING BEFORE YOU?
ONCE YOU'VE UNDERSTOOD THAT, EVEN COMPLAINING A BIT
WON'T STOP YOU FROM MOVING FORWARD, STEP BY STEP.

...AND NOW I'VE REALIZED
I WOULDN'T WANT THE OTHERS TO WORRY
TRUE
...OKAY, SHOULD WE GO BACK?
IN MY MIND THOSE DAYS
ARE STILL NOT OVER.
I CAN'T GO BACK IN THE PAST
NOR CAN I CHANGE IT
AND THAT'S WHY...
I'M STIL UNABLE
TO ACCEPT THAT CONCLU-SION

I WANT TO RESOLVE MY ISSUES NOT IN THE PAST...
BUT
BY DOING SOMETHING RIGHT NOW
AND BY DOING THAT,
I COULD GIVE SOME COURAGE TO NOMIYA
WHO'S LIKE ME, UNABLE TO MOVE FORWARD...
YES, NOT IN THE PAST
BUT NOW
AH, I GET IT NOW
THAT'S EXCATLY WHAT SHIMA DECIDED
I'VE DECIDED TO GO BACK TO THE TRACK TEAM.
I WOULDN'T WANT TO END HIGH SCHOOL
WITH UNPLEASANT MEMORIES...

I ALREADY KNOW THAT.
I CAN STILL WEAVE THE REST OF THE STORY IN THE PRESENT.
BUT REGARDLESS OF TIME,
I CAN'T REWRITE WHAT'S ALREADY HAPPENED.

JUST LIKE WE'VE ALL MANAGED TO MEET AGAIN
AND TO START OVER.



KOU-CHAN?
?

YOU WERE AFRAID OF TIME

YOU SAID THAT
...SAY, NOMIYA ...

AFRAID THAT ONE DAY, THE TIME SPENT WITH ALL THE "SAKURA"
WOULD COME TO AN END
..IF YOU KNEW THAT, EVEN IF THE SAKURA SPLIT UP, ONE DAY,
THEY COULD BE REUNITED AGAIN...
WOULD YOU STILL BE AFRAID OF TIME?

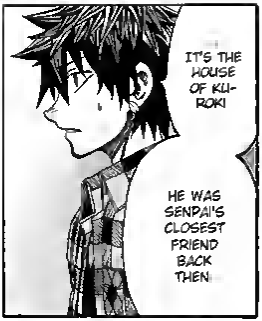
.....
KOU-CHAN?
I'M NOT SURE IF IT'S POSSIBLE...
BUT...
IMAGINE...

IMAGINE THAT I CAN GATHER MY OLD BASEBALL CLUB ONCE AGAIN...
WILL YOU BE ABLE TO BELIEVE
THAT THE SAKURA WON'T BE SEPARATED FOREVER?
WELL, YOU CAN CALL IT A CLASS REUNION
IF WE CAN DO THAT, IT COULD SERVE AS PAYMENT
FOR HARUKA AND SENPAI'S HOSPITALITY . YOU KNOW

YEAH!!
SURE!!
LET'S MAKE THEM A SURPRISE.
TO BOTH HARUKA AND SHUU-ICHI.
NOMIYA
IF BOTH OF US ARE CURRENTLY UNABLE TO MOVE FORWARD...

JUST LIKE
OLD STORIES BELONG TO THE PAST.
THEN LET'S TAKE THIS STEP TOGETHER.
HM?
KOUSUKE ISN'T BACK YET?
HE'S NOT HERE, AT LEAST
NEITHER IS MIYA, NOW THAT I THINK OF IT.
OH, HARUKA, YOU WOULDN'T KNOW WHERE THEY ARE?
I CAN'T BELIEVE DONUTS WOULD MISS DINNER
JUST LET THEM BE.
THEY'RE LIKE EVERYONE, YOU KNOW?

THEY CAN'T
STAY KIDS FOREVER.



Chapter 37 Reunion

ON THAT DAY.
WHEN I FAILED TO GRASP THAT "ONE VICTORY".
I RAN AWAY FROM THE CLUB.
...DOES IT HAVE TO BE TODAY?
DID I REALLY HAVE TO COME TODAY?
I COULD HAVE WAITED FOR TOMORROW...
KOU-CHAN
AND HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO FACE HIM...?

TAKE "ONE MORE STEP"...
REMEMBER?
.....
YEAH.
HONESTLY... I'M SCARED
BUT...
THAT'S WHY I HAVE TO STEP FORWARD

TAKE A NEW STEP THAT WILL GET ME
FROM THOSE STALE DAYS, TO THE PRESENT.
CHAPTER 37: REUNION

Ding dong
May I know who you are?
Yes, Kuroki here
?
!
KUROKI HIMSELF...?
... ERM ...
SORRY TO COME SO LATE AT NIGHT.
...MY NAME IS SAKURA KOUSUKE...

Sakura
Kousuke
?
BATATA TATAM
ビクッ
EEK
BAM
TAP TAP TAP TAP
WOH?!
ダダダダダ
バン

KU. .
KUROKI ...?
. IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME
ERM... I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START...
...FIRST, I HADN'T GIVEN ANY NEWS UNTIL NOW, SO...
WAIT.
HEY, KOUSUKE.
GRIT YOUR TEETH, WILL YA?
.....
YES?

DONE. NOW, ALL'S SETTLED.
KU...
KUROKI...?
I TOLD YOU EVERYTHING WAS SETTLED
YOU WERE ABOUT TO APOLOGIZE RIGHT NOW
ALL ABOUT NONSENSICAL STUFF TOO.
KUROKI
LET'S LEAVE ASIDE ALL THAT STUPIDITY...

KOUSUKE, YOU LITTLE BASTARD...
HOW ARE YOU DOIN'?
...I'M FINE
...THANK YOU!

...WELL, SHUUICHI TOLD ME YOU HAD COME TO VISIT HIM.

BUT NOW YOU WANNA GATHER EVERYONE FROM OUR OLD CLUB?
WITHOUT TELLING SHUUICHI OR HARUKA, TO BOOT?
HOW IS IT? DO YOU THINK IT'S POSSIBLE...?

WAIT, YOU'RE GOING HOME IN ONLY FOUR DAYS, RIGHT?
YOU THINK YOU CAN GATHER ALL OF OUR GUYS BEFORE THAT?
I WAS PLANNING ON VISITING EVERYONE'S HOUSES TODAY AND TOMORROW
...WELL...
YOU SURE? LIKE NAKATANI'S IN THE DORMS IN HIS HIGH SCHOOL...
JUST SEEING HIM MIGHT BE TOUGH
Hm? Or is he back on his house for summer break?
ASH!
YOU... YOU'RE KIDDING ME...

I'M GRATEFUL, BUT...
ERR... NO...
IF I CALL THEM, YOU WON'T NEED TO VISIT THEM ONE BY ONE..
I HAVE EVERYONE'S CONTACTS, THOUGH.

MEET WITH THEM DIRECTLY.
IT WOULD BE BEST IF I COULD..

'THAT SO.
...HMPF

BY THE WAY, KOUSUKE...
WHO THE HELL'S THAT GAL?! IS SHE YOUR WOMAN?!
!?
SHE... SHE'S NOT!!
H... HOW CAN I EXPLAIN IT... IT'S A LONG STORY...
WHAT?!
YOU CAN KEEP YOUR LONGASS EXPLANATION!
JUST GO GET CLOBBERED BY THE OTHERS, ALREADY!!
You wimp
OUCH!
WHAT.. YOU ALREADY KNOW I'LL GET PUNCHED?!
ERM, KOU-CHAN...
AIN'T I... KINDA USELESS, HERE?
UGH
SORRY... IT DOES FEEL A BIT AWKWARD.
You don't even know them
Tell me if there's any progress!

IF IT DOESN'T BOTHER YOU...
BUT, STILL, YOU KNOW
I'D PREFER YOU... TO STAY WITH ME... I THINK.
THAT WAY, IF I'M ABOUT TO CHICKEN OUT...
YOU CAN CALL ME OUT AND TELL ME I SUCK.

IT'LL PUT ME BACK ON TRACK.
IF YOU DO THAT.
AND, Y'KNOW...
...YOU DON'T WANT TO?
...OKAY.
I'LL STAY WITH YOU.

Eat this, kou-suke!!
NOMIYA.
DON'T YOU THINK IT'S FUNNY?
? WHAT, KOU-CHAN?
Here I go!
DOING A CLASS REUNION LIKE THIS IS LIKE LEAPING BACK TO THE OLD DAYS...
You damn ria-juu!
BUT AT THE SAME TIME, IT MAKES YOU REALIZED HOW MUCH TIME HAS PASSED.
YOU BOTH GO BACK, AND MOVE FORWARD.
SO IT MIGHT SEEM CONTRA-DICTORY, BUT...
I GUESS YOU CAN'T GO BACK IF YOU DON'T MOVE FORWARD FIRST.
SO THAT YOU CAN MEET EVERYONE AGAIN WITH YOUR HEAD HELD HIGH.

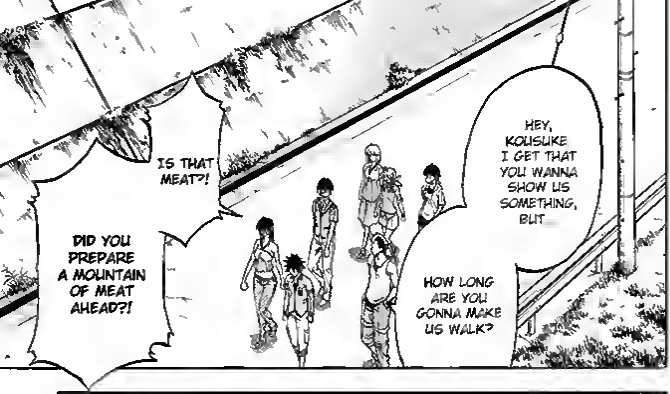
PROUDLY MEETING EVERYONE, THEN PARTING AGAIN...
AND DOING YOUR BEST UNTIL YOU CAN MEET THEM AGAIN.
ALL WHILE THINKING THAT THEY MUST BE WORKING HARD TOO.

A CLUB REUNION?!
SURE, COUNT ME IN!!
!
REALLY?!

SO THAT LEAVES ONLY KEN'YA AND KAZUYUKI?
ERR, AND WHY ARE YOU ALL FOLLOWING ME?
Even Kuroki
BY THE WAY, KOU-SUKE
WHAT HAVE YOU PLANNED FOR OUR GREAT TEARY REUNION?
IT'D BETTER NOT BE SOMETHING BORING, OR I'LL BE MAD.

... COME ON, IF I GATHERED YOU OF ALL PEOPLE,
DO YOU THINK WE'RE GONNA PLAY CHESS?
NAH!!
I GUESS THAT'S NOT THE PLAN
ABOUT THAT...
I SHOULD ASK HIM LATER.
..."TAKE ONE MORE STEP. AND THE WORD WILL CHANGE"

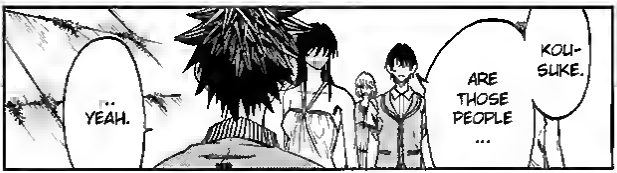
NOW THAT YOU HAVE TAKEN "ONE MORE STEP"...
HOW IS THE WORLD
REFLECTED IN YOUR EYES, KOU-CHAN?



Chapter 38. Play Ball!

WHAT I WANTED TO SHOW YOU.
THIS IS

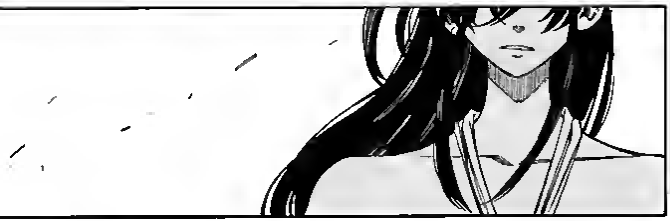
...HUH...
...WHY ARE YOU ALL HERE ...?


KOU-SUKE.
ARE THOSE PEOPLE ...
...YEAH.

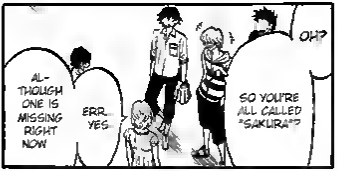
THEY'RE MY TEAMMATES
FROM OUR BASEBALL CLUB IN MIDDLE SCHOOL.

...GEEZ
YEAH
SORRY FOR NOT TELLING YOU
SO THAT'S WHERE YOU WERE THESE LAST TWO DAYS?
AFTER THE "SAKURA", HE'S GATHERING HIS OLD BASEBALL TEAM, NOW...
Kousuke! Why are there three girls?!
Damn you!
You're enjoying your high school life aren't ya...
Hey!
Let's punch him one more time!!
"I WANNA DO A CLUB REUNION."
HE WANTED TO MAKE YOU A SURPRISE, HE SAID.
KOUSUKE CAME TO MY HOUSE, SCARED SHITLESS.
TWO DAYS AGO....
HERE, SHUU-ICHI.
ISN'T THIS YOUR GLOVE?

AIN'T THAT A NICE KOUHAI?
... YEAH.
HE'S THE BEST KOUHAI YOU CAN FIND.
REALLY.
HE'S ALWAYS BEEN



HARUKA? WHAT'S WRONG?
YOU'RE SPACING OUT—
AH?!
.....

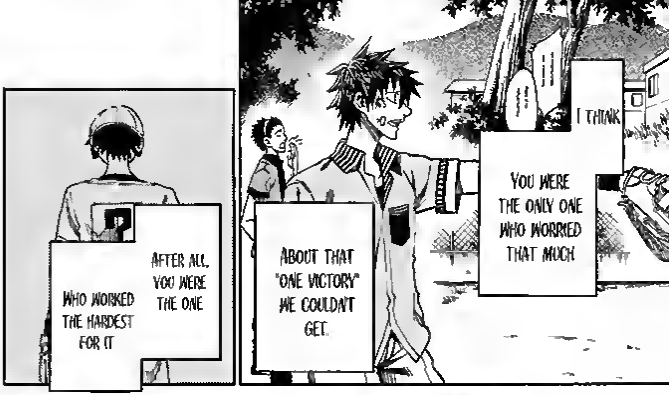

OH?
SO YOU'RE ALL CALLED "SAKURA"?
ERR. YES.
AL-THOUGH ONE IS MISSING RIGHT NOW

—HOW CAN I GO ON A TRIP WITH GIRLS?
HEY KOU-SUKE
CAN I PUNCH YOU AGAIN?
DO YOU LIKE IT THAT MUCH?!

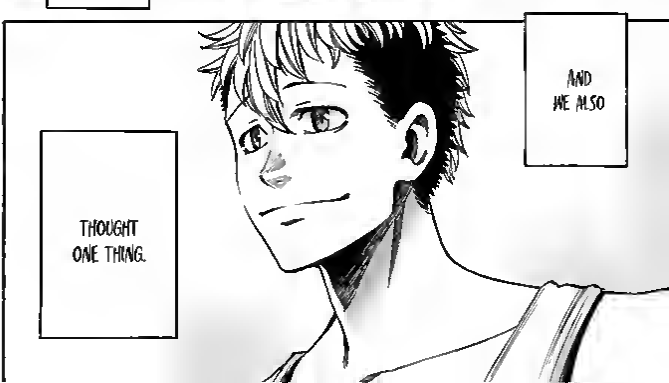
くわっ
I WAS JUST WONDERING HOW MUCH MEAT WE WOULD NEED WITH ALL THOSE PEOPLE!!
WHEN DID I SAY THAT?!
WH-WHAT?!
WHAT?! WHO'S WIDE OPEN?! HUH?! YOU DAMN DONUTS!
I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL, HARUKA
OF COURSE YOU'RE CONFUSED
I DIDN'T EVEN CONSIDER IT.
EVEN I WOULD HAVE NEVER THOUGHT ALL THE MEMBERS WOULD EVER BE TOGETHER AGAIN

OKA!!
KILLING INTENT RIGHT OFF THE BAT?!
DIE!! KOU-SUKE!!
How dare you be happy?!
WOOPS, SORRY
I WAS AIMING FOR KOU-SUKE...

WAIT. KOUSUKE!! HEY, KOU-SUKE?!
WHO'S THAT GIRL?! SHE'S KINDA SCARY!!
And damn strong!!
OH MY
Hey, Me-guku
Don't hit him too hard, okay?
Please, stop hurt
...YOU KNOW, KOUSUKE.


I THINK
YOU WERE THE ONLY ONE WHO WORRIED THAT MUCH
ABOUT THAT "ONE VICTORY" WE COULDN'T GET.
AFTER ALL, YOU WERE THE ONE
WHO WORKED THE HARDEST FOR IT

SO WE ALL THOUGHT
THAT LEAVING YOU ASIDE...
AND GATHERING TO HAVE FUN WITHOUT YOU
DIDN'T FEEL RIGHT.


AND WE ALSO
THOUGHT ONE THING.

IF ONE DAY YOU WANTED
TO HAVE ALL OF US TOGETHER...

WHATEVER HAPPENED
WE WOULD ALL GATHER WITHOUT A SECOND THOUGHT.

.....
LOOK, LIL' BRO.

THIS BASEBALL CLUB THAT YOU LOVED SO MUCH...
THAT EASILY, IT SEEMS...
WON'T DISAPPEAR

!!
KOU-SUKE, GO!!
...!
YES!!

WOW!?
A DIVING CATCH!!
That's the spirit!
THAT'S SOME FINE PLAY!!
WELL PROVIDED YOU CAN CATCH THE BALL...

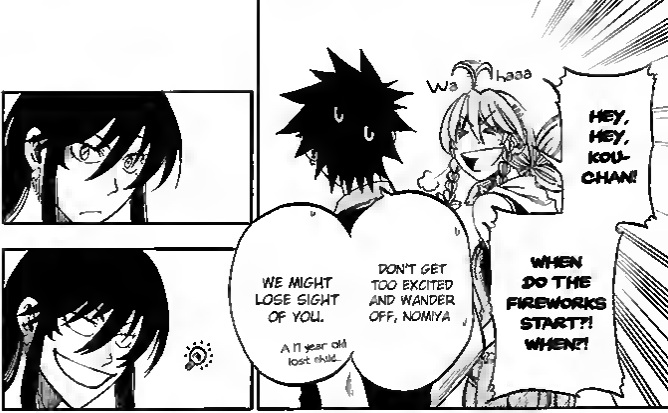
SENPAI..
..I..
REACHED IT...
YEAH
YOU DID...!!
I...
I..
I REALLY REACHED IT...!!

SENPAI... THERE IS SOMETHING I ALWAYS WANTED TO TELL YOU...
BUT... FAILED TO UNTIL NOW...
NOT "SORRY" ..
BUT SOMETHING I FELT MUCH STRONGER

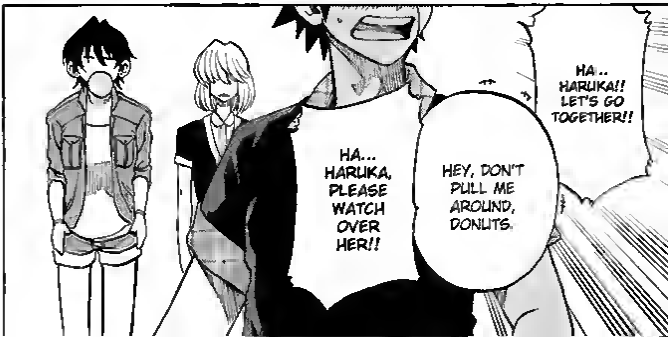
FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART...
THANK YOU FOR EVERY-THING!!
...YOU'RE SUCH AN IDIOT, KOUSUKE...
SERIOUS-LY...
SHOULDN'T I BE THE ONE SAYING THAT...?

THANKS FOR MAKING US THE BEST BASEBALL CLUB THERE IS...
KOUSUKE.

OH!!
OOH!!
CHAPTER 39:
GRATITUDE
A SUMMER FESTI-VAAAAL!!

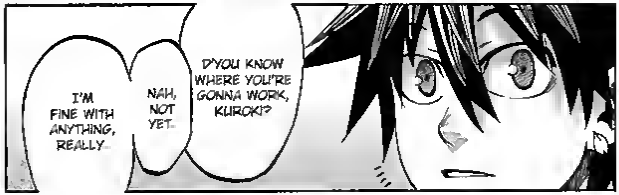

Waaa
HEY, HEY, KOU-CHAN!
WHEN DO THE FIREWORKS START?! WHEN?!
DON'T GET TOO EXCITED AND WANDER OFF, NOMIYA
WE MIGHT LOSE SIGHT OF YOU.
A 17 year old lost child...

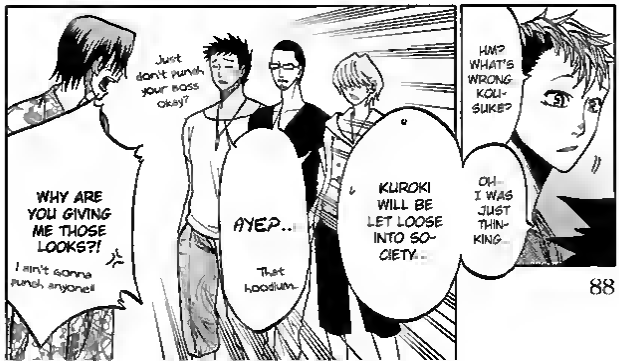
KOU-SUKE!
IF YOU DON'T WANNA LOSE HER, WHY NOT TAKE HER HAND?
HMM...
WHAT?!


HA.. HARUKA!! LET'S GO TOGETHER!!
HEY, DON'T PULL ME AROUND, DONUTS.
HA... HARUKA, PLEASE WATCH OVER HER!!

MEBUKI
DOSN'T THAT LOOK TASTY? WE SHOULD EAT SOME COME ON, LET'S EAT SOME
DROWNING YOU SORROWS IN FOOD?
Or something more?
ERR, WELL, NOT THAT I MIND
THOSE TWO ARE GETTING CLOSER AND CLOSER, AREN'T
AAH, KOUSUKE'S GOING HOME TOMORROW, ISN'T HE
IT WAS WAY TOO SHORT, SERIOUSLY
CAN'T YOU STAY ONE MORE WEEK OR SOMETHING?
NAH... I HAVE MAKE-UP CLASSES TO TAKE...
JUST SKIP THE DAMN THING!
SPEAKING OF WHICH

ARE YOU LOT REALLY FINE...? DON'T YOU HAVE EXAMS THIS YEAR?
You spend your time with Sensei and Haruka
YEAH, NO BIG DEAL
Just taking a breather
WHAT'S WRONG WITH RUNNING AWAY FROM REALITY?!
NAKA-TAN!
MEH, I'M GOING STRAIGHT INTO EM-PLOYMENT, ANYWAY


D'YOU KNOW WHERE YOU'RE GONNA WORK, KUROKI?
NAH, NOT YET.
I'M FINE WITH ANYTHING, REALLY.


HM? WHAT'S WRONG KOU-SUKE?
OH... I WAS JUST THIN-KING...
KUROKI WILL BE LET LOOSE INTO SO-CIETY...
AYEP...
That hoodlum.
Just don't punch your boss okay?
WHY ARE YOU GIVING ME THOSE LOOKS?!
I ain't gonna punch anyone!!

STILL, I'M GLAD YOU CHOSE THIS YEAR TO COME BACK
NEXT YEAR, GETTING US ALL TOGETHER WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN SO EASY
YEAH.
YOU'RE ALL HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS
BOOM
ドン
OOH.
THE SHOW'S STARTING.

KUROKI
KUROKI
SINCE EVERYONE'S WATCHING THE FIRE-WORKS, NO ONE'S AT THE BOOTHS!!
THAT'S THE PERFECT TIMING, YOU MORON!!
HUH?! THE FIRE-WORKS HAVE JUST BEGUN!!
PERFECT!! LET'S GO GRAB SOME TAKOYAKI!!

WE'LL BE TOGETHER AGAIN
WE'RE THE BASEBALL CLUB
THAT YOU BROUGHT TOGETHER

.....
KOU-SUKE

IT'S ALRIGHT

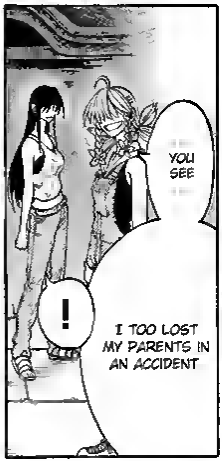
あめ
りんごあめ
500円
... YES
YOU'RE RIGHT.
OOH! HARUKA, HARUKA!!
IT'S STARTING !!

HEY, HARUKA!
HARUKA, DO YOU HEAR ME?!
.....
HARUKA?
I BEG OF YOU... OH GODS!!
PLEASE CURE KOUSUKE'S ILLNESS...
OH... SORRY
I USED TO COME HERE QUITE OFTEN, SO, YOU KNOW

...WAS THAT..
FOR YOUR BRO-THER...?
!
.....
AH!
SO... SORRY... I SHOU-LDN'T HAVE...
OH... SO KOUSUKE TOLD YOU ABOUT IT?
IT'S FINE, DON'T WORRY.
.....
HIS NAME WAS KOU-SUKE.
!
ISN'T THE WORLD SMALL? HE HAD THE SAME NAME AS YOUR KOUSUKE.

YOU SEE, ON THE DAY OUR BROTHER PASSED AWAY...
I PROMISED THAT I WOULDN'T CRY.
CRYING AND SCREAMING WOULDN'T CHANGE A THING.
SO, TO NOT STAY STUCK IN THE PAST...
I PUT A LID ON IT ALL, DREW A LINE...
AND SAID THAT I WOULDN'T TURN BACK

SOMETIMES IT'S NOT SO BAD
TO TURN AROUND A LITTLE.
AND YET ...
SPEAKING TO YOU ABOUT THE OLD DAYS ...
AND SEEING KOUSUKE GATHER THE BASEBALL CLUB SO EASILY...
I REALIZED ONE THING


YOU SEE
!
I TOO LOST MY PARENTS IN AN ACCIDENT

I DIDN'T JUST PUT THE LID ON THE SAD CONCLUSION...
BUT ALSO ON ALL THOSE FOND MEMORIES
THAT I SHOULD HAVE CHERISHED.

...CONTRARY TO YOU, I REFUSED TO MOVE ON.
WHEN YOU SAY "THE PAST IS IN THE PAST"...
I CAN'T HELP BUT ADMIRING YOU.
BUT YOU SEE...
THERE'S AT LEAST ONE REASON I'M GLAD I DIDN'T MOVE ON IMMEDIATELY.
I COULD NOTICE SOME-THING
SAAA-KURA!!
A SOU-VENIR FOR YOU
SURE, I WAS TORN APART BY THE SAD-NESS...
AND THE LONINESS, BUT...
WHAT?! WHAT IS IT?!

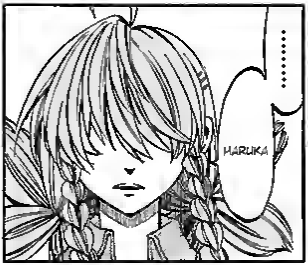
I DON'T WANT TO LOSE THOSE HAPPY MEMORIES WITH THE PAINFUL ONES.
I WANT TO MOVE FORWARD EMBRACING BOTH.
THAT'S WHAT I THINK, NOW.
I MUST GIVE THEM GRATITUDE THAT AT LEAST EQUALS THE PAIN.
THAT'S WHY
THEN THAT MEANS I HAD SOMETHING IRREPLACEABLE.
IF IT WAS SO PRECIOUS THAT LOSING IT MADE ME UNABLE TO MOVE ON...
HERE.
THE DONUTS YOU LOVE SO MUCH!!
AHAHA!! DEAR, YOU BROUGHT DONUTS AGAIN?
FUFU, IN THAT CASE I GUESS I SHOULD BREW SOME BLACK TEA.

...HARU.
HERE'S YOUR BIRTHDAY PRESENT...
SAKURA-SHAPED... PIERCINGS?
M-MAYBE IT WASN'T SUCH A GOOD IDEA...?
NAH, IT'S TOTALLY FINE, KOU-SUKE
HA HARU!! DON'T GO TO SCHOOL WITH THEM ON, OKAY?!
I just give them to you.
YOU'RE NOT MAKING SENSE! RIGHT, SHUUICHI?!
...YOU'RE RIGHT.
YOU ARE ... SO RIGHT ...

...YOU KNOW, HARUKA...
I DO THINK THAT CRYING AND SCREAMING WON'T CHANGE A THING...
BUT THAT'S WHY...
I DON'T THINK IT'S WRONG TO CRY OR SCREAM EITHER.

WHEN WE REMINISCE THEM, THEY'RE LIKE FIREWORKS...
EPHEMEROUS, YET ONDYING MEMORIES, BURNED INTO OUR EYES.
SO PRECIOUS
AND SO HAPPY
...THANK YOU.
THEY ARE DAYS WE LOVED SO MUCH.

TO THIS PAIN IN MY CHEST
AND TO THOSE BELOVED DAYS
THANK YOU, KOUSUKE...!!
I GIVE MY ENDLESS GRATITUDE...



CHAPTER 40: ON THE WAY HOME

VWOOOOOH
うおおおおお
GODSPEED, DONUTS!!
TAKE CARE OF YOUR BODY, OKAY?! DON'T CATCH A COLD!!
GOOD LUCK FOR YOUR EXAMS, HARUKA!!
AND DON'T OVERWORK YOURSELF!!
WELL, IF THEY GET ALONG, ALL'S FINE AND DANDY, AIN'T IT?
WEREN'T THOSE TWO AT EACH OTHER'S THROATS A FEW DAYS AGO?
Well it's Nomiya but still
VWOOOOOH
OH?
KOUSUKE SHOULDN'T YOU GO NOW?
!
AH
...SENPAI.
I'LL CALL YOU AGAIN... PROMISE.
SURE!
CALL ME ALL YOU WANT!!

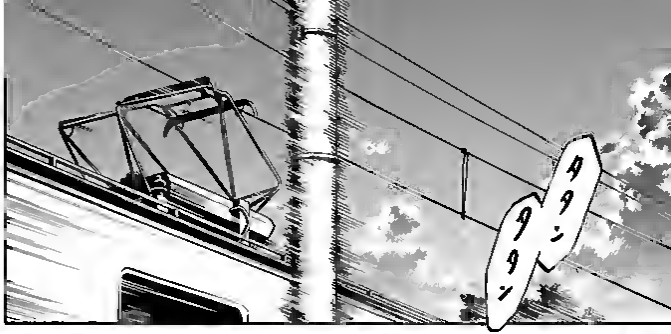
.....

REALLY
IT ALL WENT IN A FLASH...

ビク!?
HEY, WAIT A MINUTE, YOU BAS-TARD!!
KOUSU-KEEE!!
YOU GOT SOME NERVE, TRYING TO LEAVE
WITHOUT EVEN KISSING US GOOD BYE!!

AND YOU'D BETTER BRING AT LEAST 10 BABES WITH YOU NEXT TIME!!
We'll have a mixer!
YOU'D BETTER NOT IGNORE MY E-MAILS!!
YOU CAN COME AGAIN, LITTLE SHIT!!
TAKE CARE!!
LET'S PLAY BASEBALL AGAIN!! ALL TOGETHER!
IF NOT, WE'LL COME PUNCH YOU AGAIN!!
AND, ERR, WHAT'S HIS NAME... SAKURAJIMA?!
BRING THAT GUY WITH YOU NEXT TIME!

KOUSUKE!! IT'S A PROMISE, OKAY?!
KOUSUKE!! YOU'D BETTER TAKE CARE OF THEM!!
WE'LL MEET AGAIN, WITHOUT FAIL!!
NEXT TIME I'LL STUFF YOU WITH MEAT TO DEATH!!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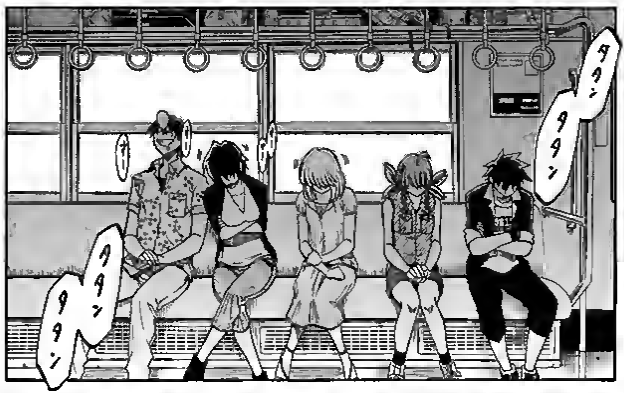
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KOU-CHAN
ARE YOU AWAKE?
WHAT'S UP, NOMIYA?
WELL
NOT MUCH

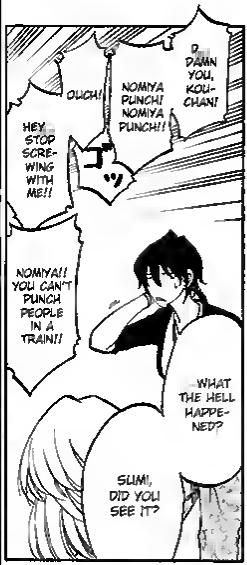
LOTS OF STUFF HAPPENED HUH
THAT WEEK SURE WENT BY FAST
タタン
タタン
HAHA.
IT SURE DID.
SENPAI AND HARUKA PLANNED ALL SORTS OF EVENTS
AND WE COULD EVEN BRING IN THE GUYS OF THE CLUB
タタン
タタン
YOU KNOW, KOU-CHAN
THANK YOU.
NOMIYA?
タタン

RIGHT NOW...
I'M NOT AFRAID OF TIME ANYMORE.
HONEST-LY
TIME ITSELF SCARES ME
AFTER SEEING YOU WITH YOUR OLD BASEBALL CLUB
THAT'S WHAT I CAME TO THINK
SO IT'S ALL
THANKS TO YOU.

IF YOU'RE GOING THERE,
THEN I MANAGED TO REUNITE WITH THE CLUB
THANKS TO YOU.
SO... YOU SEE
I'M THE ONE WHO SHOULD BE THANKING YOU
NOMIYA.
.. THANK YOU.

ガン
ガン
ガン
ガン
HAAAAAA-
AAAAAAA-
AAAAH?!!
ソハア
WH-WHAT?! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?! KOU-CHAN?! KOU-CHAN?!
HUUUH?! YOU'RE THE ONE WHO DID IT, THOUGH?!
HM.
WHAT'S THE MATTER
WH- WHAT'S WRONG YOU TWO ?!

プルプル
プルプル
SHE WAS AWAKE


D-DAMN YOU, KOU-CHAN!
NOMIYA PUNCH! NOMIYA PUNCH!!
OUCH!
HEY, STOP SCREWING WITH ME!!
ゴッ
NOMIYA!! YOU CAN'T PUNCH PEOPLE IN A TRAIN!!
WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED?
SUMI, DID YOU SEE IT?

……
SUMI?

HAHAHA! THAT SUCKS...
MY HOMEWORK ISN'T DONE YET...
HAHA! YOU'RE GOOD FOR MORE MAKE-UP CLASSES, SAKURAJIMA.
PLEASE!! HAYAMI..
WE'RE IN THE SAME CLUB, YOU CAN HELP ME!!
HA HA HA
WELL, YOU CAN HELP YOURSELF.
HEYA
SHIMA...
PLEASE, SOMEONE BE NICE TO ME!!

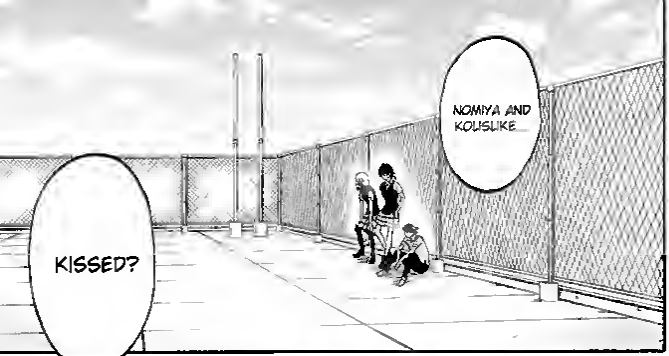
OH, MEBUKI!
IT'S BEEN A WHILE.
SO YOU'RE REALLY GOING TO YOUR CLUB NOW.
How commendable
...THE NEW TERM IS JUST STARTING SO PLEASE DON'T TWIST THE KNIFE
SAKURAJIMA
I'LL SHOW YOU MY HOMEWORK IF YOU INTRODUCE ME
Totally my type.
IF YOU DON'T MIND HER HAVING A BOYFRIEND SURE.
Tsk
Dammit
RIGHT SORRY TO ASK YOU RIGHT OFF THE BAT BUT...
COULD YOU DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT?
...WHAT?

プルル
Oh hi, Shima...
How are ya doin'... uhuhu...
プルル
Did you have plenty of fun during summer break...?

SLIM!
YOSHI
GULP
...IS THAT YOU!?

BEFORE
ずぅーん
AFTER
SUMIYOSHI DID SOMETHING HAPPEN AFTER I LEFT?
GOING BY THE TIMING, I'D SAY...
IT HAPPENED ON THE TRAIN...
ki!
ki...
CHAPTER 4: HESITATION
fufufufufufufu
MY... PEOPLE SURE CAN CHANGE.
fufufufu
YOU'RE ONE TO TALK, MERUKI.

I... IN THE TRAIN THOSE TWO KI... KIII!!
CALM DOWN, SUMI-YOSHI...
OUCH!
THEY CAN
...PEOPLE SURE CAN CHANGE
KI-KI...
KIIIIIII?!
CHAPTER 41: HESITATION


NOMIYA AND KOUSUKE...
KISSED?

すぅーん

WELL, IF THAT HAPPENED, I'M GLAD I CONFESSED JUST IN TIME.
THOUGH IT MAY NOT HAVE HAPPENED IF YOU HADN'T CONFESSED IN THE FIRST PLACE.
COME ON, DON'T SAY THAT!!

I see...
Nomiya and Kousuke... kissed...
...AND ANOTHER ONE GOES GAGA.

...BUT STILL...
IF MEBUKI IS REALLY CORRECT...
I SHOULD APOLOGIZE TO YOU, SUMI-YOSHI.
...WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
I MADE MY OWN CHOICE.
THAT TIME... YOU TOLD ME YOU WERE GONNA CONFESS TO NOMIYA,
AND I CHOSE A DIFFERENT OPTION.
THERE'S NOTHING MORE TO IT.

...I SEE
OH HEY !!
WELCOME BACK, SUMI!
UGH
JUST CAN IT, MEBUKI, WILL YOU?
...THERE'S ONE THING
I CAME TO SEE CLEARLY

EVERYTHING YOU DID, KOUSUKE.
WAS FOR NOMIYA

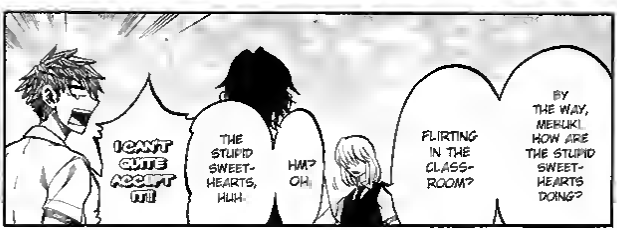
...YOU COULD SAY
I'M JUST TRYING TO ACT TOUGH.
OR THAT I'M JUST WEAVING A PRETTY TALE.
BUT EVEN SO...

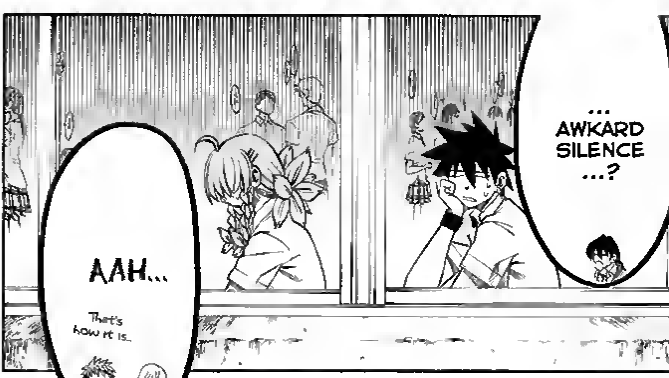
IN THE END...
I FELL IN LOVE WITH KOUSUKE
BECAUSE HE WAS IN LOVE WITH NOMIYA.
I CAN'T DENY THAT I FEEL FRUSTRATED
AND THAT MY CHEST HURTS A LITTLE. BUT...
HUPSIE...

GOOD GRIEF.
ISN'T THERE A GOOD MAN FOR ME, SO-MEWHERE?

KI... KI... KI...?!
WH... WHAT WERE THOSE TWO DOING IN A PUBLIC PLACE?!
SUCH A... SUCH IN-DENCENCY!!
WELL, LONG STORY SHORT, THE SHOCK WAS A BIT TOO INTENSE FOR HER.
I FEEL SILLY FOR EVEN WORRYING
...BUT ANYWAY
HEY, HEY, SUMI.
WHAT, MEBUKI?
THERE IS A GOOD MAN NEARBY!!
HUH.
WHAT?!
Where did that come from?!
.....
I'M SORRY.

I MEAN... I DON'T HATE YOU OR ANYTHING, BUT, WELL, I DON'T LIKE YOU THAT WAY...
SO LET'S STAY GOOD FRIENDS?
HUH?! WHY?!
WHY DOES IT SOUND LIKE I'M BEING DUMPED?!
ERR, YEAH! YOU CAN BE!
ERM, SHIMA... I'M SORRY?


BY THE WAY, MERUKI. HOW ARE THE STUPID SWEETHEARTS DOING?
FLIRTING IN THE CLASSROOM?
HM? OH.
THE STUPID SWEETHEARTS, HUH.
I CAN'T QUITE ACCEPT IT!!


...AWKARD SILENCE...?
AAH...
That's how it is...

MEBUKI?
?
I DON'T THINK THAT'S ACTUALLY STRESS
HM, WELL...
RATHER THAN BEING SHY OR EMBARRASSED...
IT FEELS MORE LIKE THEY ARE AVOIDING EACH OTHER.

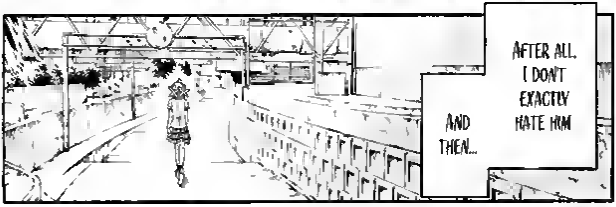
KO...
KOUSUKE!! LET'S HAVE LUNCH!!
HM?
OH, SURE...
SO SORRY, OKAPYON. I FORGOT MY LUNCH-BOX
SO YOU CAN EAT WITHOUT ME!!
COME ON, NOMIYA!
REALLY?
WE CAN SHARE WITH YOU, YOU KNOW?
NAH, IT'S ALRIGHT!!
I'M GONNA BUY SOMETHING AROUND HERE!!

SERIOUSLY...
WHAT WAS I SO HAPPY ABOUT?

I LOVE KOU-CHAN.

HOWEVER...
THAT'S ALSO SHISHI'S CASE.

ACCEPTED SHIMAKOU'S CONFESSION?
WHAT IF I HAD...


AND THEN...
AFTER ALL, I DON'T EXACTLY HATE HIM

AND THEN...
WHAT ABOUT SHISHI AND KOU-CHAN?

...I'M SORRY, KOU-CHAN.

YOU HAD MANAGED
TO MAKE ME BELIEVE THAT IF THE "SAKURA" EVER DRIFTED APART,
THEY COULD BE GATHERED ONCE AGAIN, EVENTUALLY.

AND YET...

...!
SHISHI
...?
WHY...
OR WHAT IF YOU HAD ACCEPTED SHIMA'S CONFES-SION...
PER-HAPS?
!
"I'M THE ONE WHO MAKES THE "SAKURA" DRIFT APART"
...
OR SOME-THING?

Tap
Tap
Tap
OR WHAT IF YOU HAD LET ME HAVE KOUSUKE...
MAYBE?
SHI
SHISHI ...?
HAHA!
TRUE, THAT WAY, WE COULD HAVE CONTINUED TO GET ALONG
NO ONE WOULD HAVE HAD TO MAKE A HARSH CHOICE,
AND ALL SIX OF US WOULD HAVE LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER

NOW THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN A FARCE.
IT MAKES ME WANT TO VOMIT.

...!
...?!
BUKKI?!
SORRY, MIYA.
THIS WAY'S A DEAD END.
♡

WHERE YOU SAID YOU'D BECOME MY FRIEND, BACK IN MIDDLE SCHOOL.
REMEMBER... THIS ROAD IS THE ONE
ISN'T IT PERFECT, NOMIYA?
COME ON.
LET'S TALK TO OUR HEART'S CONTENT.
AFTER ALL...
AREN'T WE FRIENDS?

CHAPTER 42: SMOOTHING THE WAY
COME ON, NOMIYA.
LET'S TALK TO OUR HEART'S CONTENT.
AFTER ALL,
AREN'T WE FRIENDS?
GEEZ
GOOD THING SHIMA TOLD US BEFORE-HAND
WHEN THE TALK GETS SERIOUS, MIYA WILL RUN AWAY.

YO ! KOUSUKE
And Oka
WHAT'S UP?

WHY THE LONG FACE?
COULD IT BE THAT YOU'VE ALREADY NOTICED?
I'D LIKE TO TALK A BIT.
I . I DON'T KNOW WHERE I SHOULD START

THAT I

CONFESSED TO NOMIYA.

CHAPTER 42: SMOOTHING THE WAY

...I HADN'T REALIZED BEFORE THAT.
...I'M SORRY.
...AND THEN?
YOU DIDN'T COME TO TELL ME THAT, RIGHT?

KOUSUKE
YOU'VE DECIDED TO CONFESS TO HER TOO, HAVEN'T YOU?

SHIMA I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU MIGHT THINK OF ME
I LOVE NOMIYA, AND -
...STOP LYING.

IF YOU REALLY DIDN'T CARE ABOUT ME...
YOU WOULDN'T HAVE BOTHERED TO TALK TO ME ABOUT IT.
...LISTEN, KOUSUKE.
!
!
LISTEN, NOMIYA.

WHAT IF YOU HAD ACCEPTED SHIMA'S CONFESSION?
WHAT IF YOU HAD LET ME HAVE KOUSUKE ...?
NOMIYA, ARE YOU MAKING FUN OF US?
OF ME, OF SHIMA, AND OF KOUSUKE.
...SURE, YOU MUST THINK YOU'RE BEING CONSIDERATE TO US.
BUT WHAT'S THE POINT OF THAT CONSIDERATION...?

YOU THINK I'LL BE HAPPY IF IT GOES WELL BETWEEN YOU TWO?
DON'T FUCK WITH ME!!
YOU HEAR ME?!
I HAD MY OWN REFLEXION AND CAME UP WITH MY OWN ANSWER!
DON'T TRY TO THROW MUD ON THAT ANSWER!
YOU THINK I'LL BE HAPPY IF IT DOESN'T?!

I DON'T NEED YOU TO TAKE MY OWN STEP FORWARD!
SO, SAKURA KOU-SUKE ...

TAKE YOUR OWN STEP FORWARD WITHOUT THINKING ABOUT US!
SAKURA-
NOMIYA
SAKURA
...

...
...
SHIMA
...

...OKA?
KOU-
SUKE.
DIDN'T
I TELL
YOU?

THE
SAKURAJIMA
YUUTA THAT
I KNOW
ISN'T SUCH
A WEAK MAN.

SHIMA
I MAY NOT CHEW MY WORDS BUT I DON'T HATE THAT SIDE OF YOU.
KOU-SUKE
YOU'RE SO RIGHT.
YEAH.
ANYWAY.
WHETHER YOU TWO CAN MANAGE OR NOT IS NONE OF MY BUSI-NESS...
BUT BE SURE TO FIND HAPPINESS!!

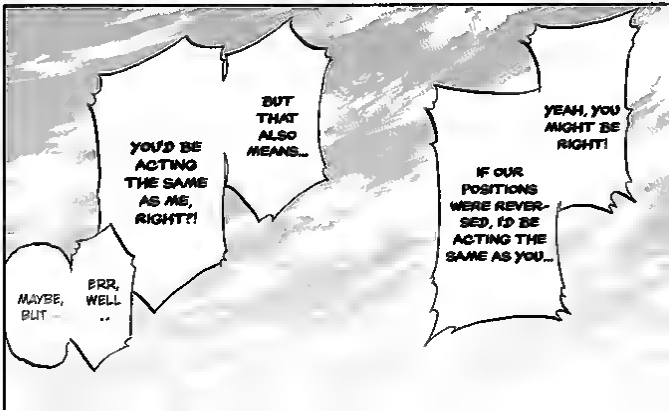
.....
YEAH.

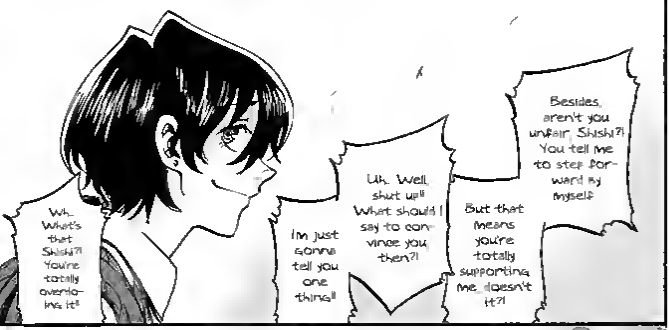
BESIDES, YOU IDIOT...
YOU'RE ALWAYS TAKING EVERYTHING UPON YOURSELF!!
YOU ALREADY DID WITH ME...
AND EVEN AFTER SHIMA CONFESSED TO YOU!!
It must be the 5th period.
Ash right now.
SAME ABOUT YOUR PARENTS...!!
HUH.
WHAT?!
DON'T BE SURPRISED, I NOTICED AGES AGO!
HOW MANY TIMES DO YOU THINK I'VE MADE DINNER FOR YOU?!
Ash
Oh
S-- STOP CALLING ME AN IDIOT...
DID YOU REALLY THINK A MORON LIKE YOU COULD HIDE IT FOREVER?!
SHIMA AND OKA KNOW ABOUT IT TOO, JUST SAYING!
IN THAT CASE, SHISHI!! LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING...
WHEN IT COMES TO TAKING EVERYTHING UPON YOURSELF, YOU'RE NOT HALF-BAD EITHER!!
SURE, GO AHEAD!
Ugh

MIYA!!
WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE TO SAY THAT?

BUT IF YOU WERE IN MY SHOES, YOU'D BEHAVE EXACTLY THE SAME!
YOU KEEP ON CRITICIZING ME RIGHT NOW...

Just do what you want
I SHUT UP, SORRY TO INTRUDE
OKAY OKAY
YOU JUST KEEP QUIET!!


MAYBE, BUT ...
ERR, WELL ..
YOU'D BE ACTING THE SAME AS ME, RIGHT?!
BUT THAT ALSO MEANS...
IF OUR POSITIONS WERE REVERSED, I'D BE ACTING THE SAME AS YOU...
YEAH, YOU MIGHT BE RIGHT!



SAKURA DISCORD.

MY, MY...
AGAIN, YOU WERE SPOT ON.
That's my Oka
LET'S COLLIDE WITH EACH OTHER IN A CACOPHONY...
You think I don't know?!
Your bedroom is filled with teddy bears?!
Huh?! What does it have to do with..
And when did you see it?!
Oh, so that explains the bear panties..
Don't say it!
SO THAT, ONE DAY, WE CAN PLAY A HARMONIOUS MELODY...!!

YO!
SUMIYOSHI, MEBUKI.
WHAT?
I DON'T THINK SCHOOL IS OUT, YET ARE YOU PLAYING HOOKY?
THAT'S THE POT CALLING THE KETTLE BLACK
LOOK, WE HAVE OUR BAGS

SO?
HOW DID IT GO OVER THERE?
NARROW VICTORY FOR SUMI, I GUESS.
SERIOUSLY, THAT GIRL IS BEYOND STUBBORN ...
She's a stone wall in her own right.

BY THE WAY, SHIMA, WHAT ABOUT YOUR CLUB?

YOU SHOULD GO AL-READY.

OH, SO YOU'RE SKIPPING TODAY? OR MAYBE ...

...!! SHIMA... DID SOME-THING HAPPEN WITH THE TRACK TEAM...?

YOU CAN TALK TO ME...

I'M GOING! I'M GOING, OKAY?!

YOU GUYS ARE HORRI-BLE!

I even brought my bag and all

Ah well you were born under the wrong star Shima

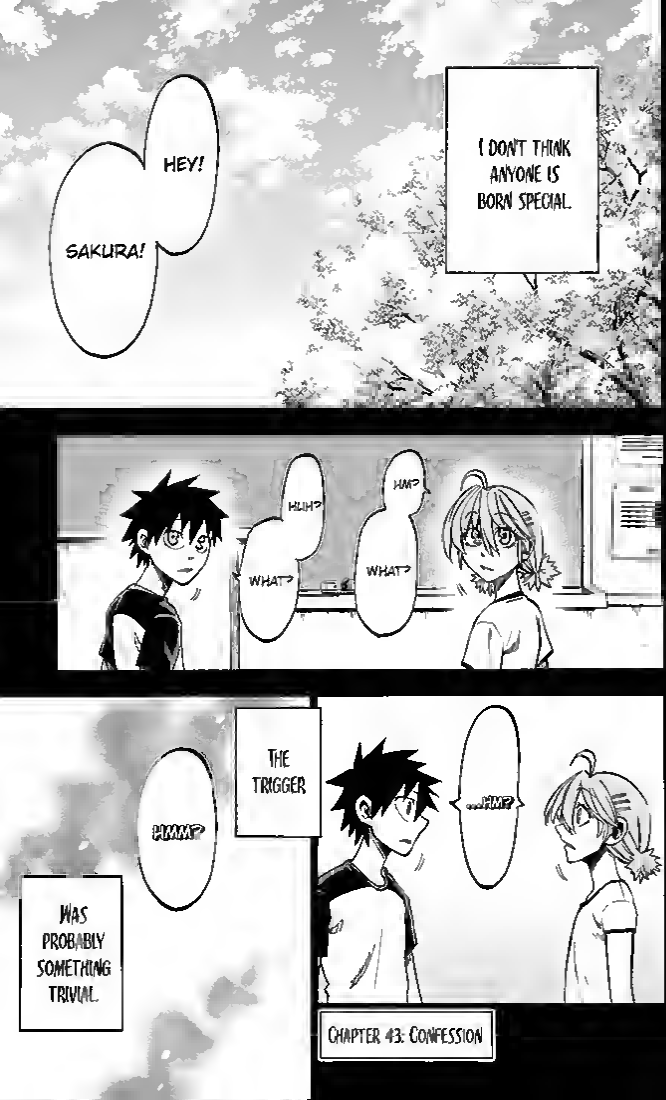
It's late ?!

...NOMIYA.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ME.

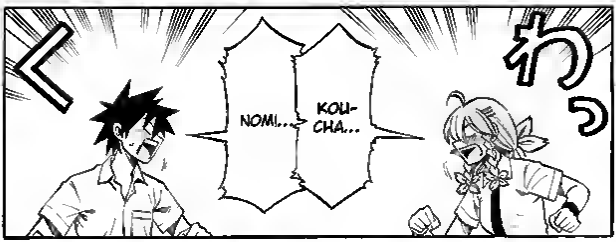
I DON'T NEED THAT TO BE HAPPY, YOU KNOW?

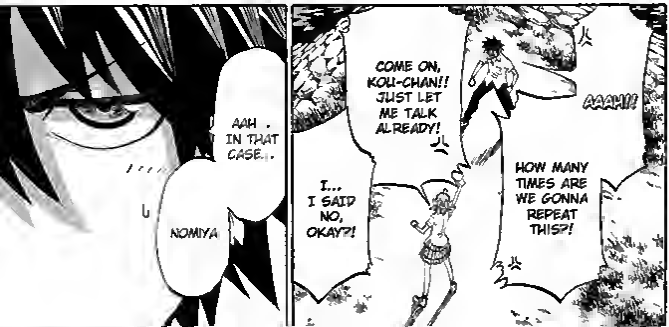
So walk your own path
... 'sup.
Nomiya.
And find your own happiness.
... Hello.
Kou-chan

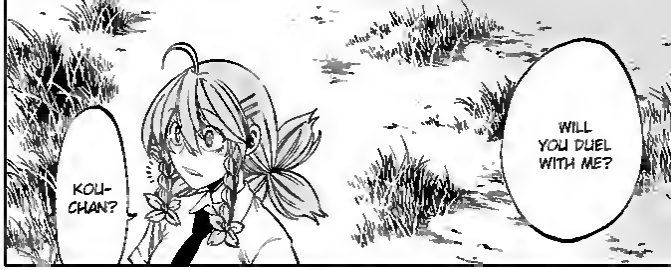

I DON'T THINK ANYONE IS BORN SPECIAL.
HEY!
SAKURA!
HUH?
WHAT?
HM?
WHAT?
THE TRIGGER
...HM?
HMM?
WAS PROBABLY SOMETHING TRIVIAL.
CHAPTER 43: CONFESSION

CHAPTER 43:
CONFESSION

.....


NOMI...
KOU-CHA...
わっ


AAH. IN THAT CASE...
NOMIYA
COME ON, KOU-CHAN!! JUST LET ME TALK ALREADY!
I... I SAID NO, OKAY?!
AAAH!!
HOW MANY TIMES ARE WE GONNA REPEAT THIS?!


KOU-CHAN?
WILL YOU DUEL WITH ME?

HOW ABOUT THIS?
WILL HAVE THE RIGHT TO SPEAK FIRST...
THE WINNER OF THIS DUEL

WE'RE GONNA DUEL...
KOU-CHAN, I GET WHAT YOU WANT

...WITH STONE SKIPPING
RIGHT?
WE'LL THROW 5 TIMES EACH
THE ONE WHO MANAGES THE MOST SKIPS IN ONE THROW WINS
OKAY?
I GO!
WHAT?!
0 skips?!
PFFT!!
You suck!!

HERE I GO!!
Let's see how you do~
HAHAHA! KOU-CHAN, YOU THROW IT TOO HARD!!
NOW WATCH THE EXPERT AND LEARN!!
WATCH AND LEARN, MY ASS!!
NWAH?!
O skips?!
HUH...
HUH?!
YES!!
HMM...
I'M ALSO A SAKURA, THOUGH!!
IF THEY CALL YOU, THEY'LL SAY "SAKURA-NOMIYA"!
OKAY WHEN THEY SAY "SAKURA", THAT MEANS ME!
SO... NEXT PROBLEM...
SAKURA!!

... SECOND THROW ...
DOUBLE ZERO AGAIN ...?
.....
KO "KOU-CHAN"?!
SOUNDS A BIT TOO... INTIMATE, DOESN'T IT?!
WHAT ABOUT "NOMIYA", HUH?!
COULDN'T YOU FIND SOMETHING CUTER?!
うおおおおおおおおお
UWOOOOOOOH
YAAAY!! 3 SKIPS!!
I MANA-GED 3 SKIPS!!
What is this?
We're... kinda lame, aren't we...?
What were those 3k skips last time?

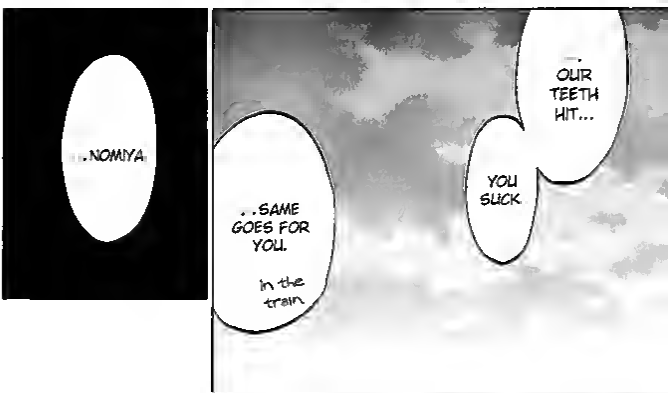
HUH?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "IT WAS THE LAST TIME"...?
WELL... I CAN'T GO TO THE SAME MIDDLE SCHOOL AS YOU...
SINCE... I'M MOVING AWAY
SURELY...
WE SIMPLY HADN'T NOTICED YET.

BUT
EVER SINCE THAT TIME...
7
...IN THE END
WE THREW 5 TIMES
AND MANAGED 7 SKIPS EACH...

LET'S SETTLE THIS!!
THEN I GUESS IT'LL BE DECIDED BY SUDDEN DEATH
.. KOU-CHAN ..
NOMIYA ?
.....
ERM..
I...
I MEAN ...
KOU-CHAN, I'VE ALWAYS ...

NOMIYA, YOU... HEY!!
Ahaha hahaha
DON'T TRY TO DOUBLE CROSS ME!!
WHO CARES, IT'S A DRAW!!
A DREAW, YA HEAR?!
ACTUALLY, I WON!!
LET'S JUST SAY THAT, OKAY?!
CLICK!
HEY, I ALSO CAN...

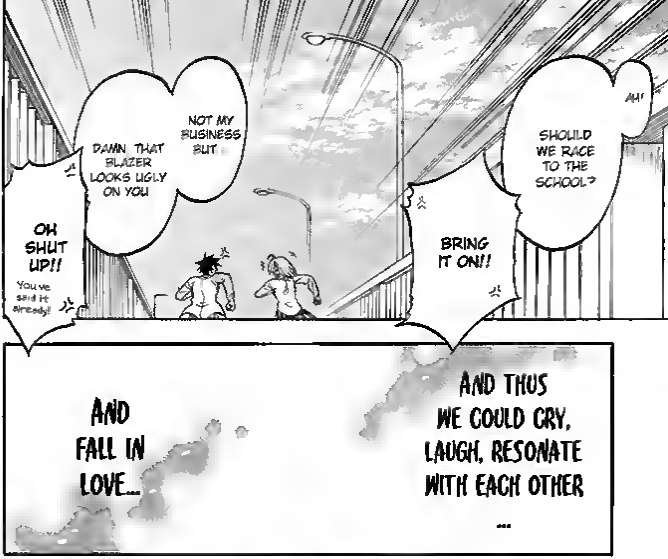
IT'S REVENGE FOR LAST TIME...
WELL... Y'KNOW...
.....


...NOMIYA
...SAME GOES FOR YOU.
In the train
YOU SUCK.
...OUR TEETH HIT...

KOU-CHAN.
I LOVE YOU.
I LOVE YOU.

WHEN YOUR OPINIONS AND BELIEFS CONSTANTLY CLASH,
IT CAN BE HARD TO REACH AN UNDERSTANDING WITH SOMEONE
"SAKURA" AND "SAKURA"
TAKE US "SAKURA",
SINCE WE HAVE LITTLE IN COMMON OUTSIDE OF OUR NAMES
WE'RE ALWAYS DISAGREEING AND BUTTING HEADS
...BUT THERE'S NOT MUCH WE CAN DO ABOUT IT

GODDAMMIT!!
GAAAH!!
DESPITE THAT...
AND YET...
WE EARNESTLY STRIVE TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER.
BEING LATE FOR THE GRADUATION CEREMONY...
WHAT KIND OF JOKE IS THAT?!
YOU SUCK!!
WHAT? TIRED ALREADY?
HUH?!


NOT MY BUSINESS BUT
DAMN THAT BLAZER LOOKS UGLY ON YOU
OH SHUT UP!!
You've said it already!
AH!
SHOULD WE RACE TO THE SCHOOL?
BRING IT ON!!
AND FALL IN LOVE...
AND THUS WE COULD CRY, LAUGH, RESONATE WITH EACH OTHER ...

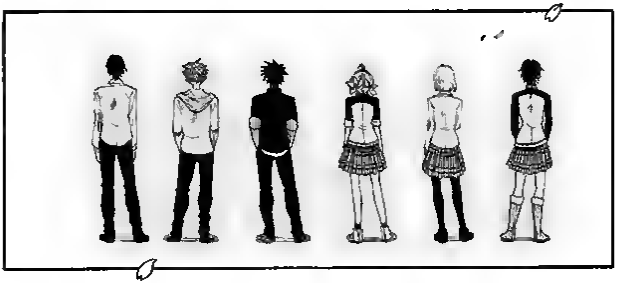
第四十三回
卒業式
45TH GRADUATION CEREMONY - SEOMI HIGH SCHOOL

I USED TO HATE SPRING.

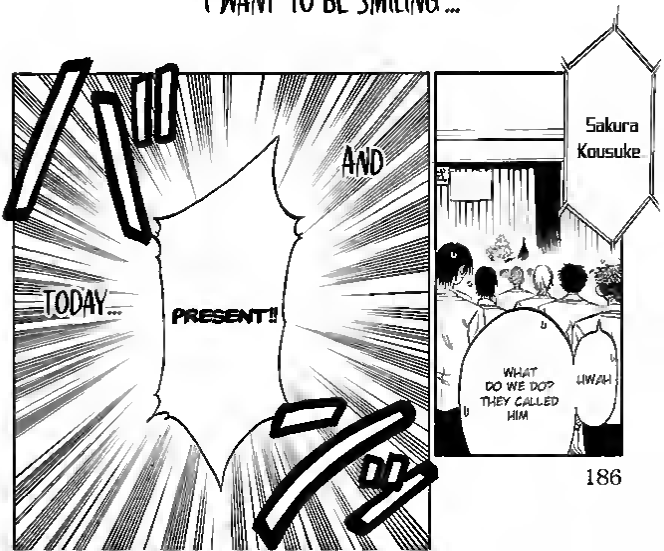
THE WARM WEATHER FORCEFULLY TELLS YOU THAT YOU HAVE TO DO SOMETHING...

BUT THAT ONLY REMINDED ME OF MY OWN POWERLESSNESS.

DURING SPRING OF MY SECOND HIGH SCHOOL YEAR, I WISHED:
"WHEN THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS HAVE BLOOMED TWO MORE TIMES..."



"I WANT TO BE SMILING"...



FINAL CHAPTER: GRADUATION

*HAPPY GRADUATION!!

THANK YOU, SAITOU-SENSEI!

CLASS 1 IS THE BEST!!

HA HA HA

YOU'RE AS LIVELY AS EVER, KOUSUKE, NOMIYA

WELL, THAT'S BECAUSE MID-WAY,

NOMIYA STARTED TO SAY SHE DIDN'T WANT TO GRADUATE

MIYA.

CU...

CUT IT OUT ALREA-DY!!

EVEN THOUGH SHIMA SOMEHOW MANAGED TO GRADUATE

CU... CUT IT OUT ALREA-DY!!

BY THE WAY, SHIMA, AREN'T YOU GOING WITH YOUR CLUB?
HM? OH
NO, THEY'RE HOLDING A GRADUATION PARTY TOMORROW
YEAH ENOUGH ABOUT SHIMA MERUKI! HOW'S YOUR MUSIC UNIVERSITY?
YOU THINK YOU CAN PASS THE EXAM?
NAH I DOUBT IT
ERM, SUMI-YOSHI I'M FINE OKAY? TOTALLY
HUH?! BUKKI?!
ERR... MERUKI IS THAT ALRIGHT?! YOU SHOULDN'T BE PLAYING AROUND...
WELL I KNEW THAT WITH ONLY A YEAR OR TWO OF STUDYING AGAIN FROM SCRATCH, IT WOULDN'T BE THAT EASY
So I changed my mind
SHE SAID SHE WAS PREPARED FOR IT
I SEE
DON'T PUSH YOURSELF TOO HARD
IT'S FINE IT'S FINE Enough of that
...IN THE END, EACH ONE OF US
CHOSE THEIR OWN CAREER.

Actually, I'm surprised you passed, Shima.
...I'm as surprised as you are.
Shima chose a sports university.
Somiyoshi's aiming to become a chef.
If I actually pass, will you do anything I want?
Sure, I don't mind.
Okabe's going to a music school.
Oka to a national university.

Yeah, yeah, I know.
You better help me out my house.
Ended up in different workplaces
And I and Nomiya...

As for me... well.
It might be a bit early to think of it right out of high school.
Nomiya's wanted to be independent for a while now

IT'S EMBARRASSING, SO I'LL KEEP IT A SECRET FOR NOW
WELL... YOU KNOW
.....
!!
!!
YEAH
MEBUKI
OKAY
WELL THEN
WE'RE LEAVING YOU HERE.

WELL
WE'LL MEET AGAIN BEFORE LONG.
AT THE APARTMENT COMPLEX, JUST AFTER GETTING HOME... RIGHT?
MEBUKI
SUMI-YOSHI

ANYWAY, SINCE IT'S OVER FOR NOW
I'LL LEAVE A FEW WORDS

I'M GLAD I COULD BE A PART OF THIS RAGTAG BUNCH.
THANK YOU ALL.

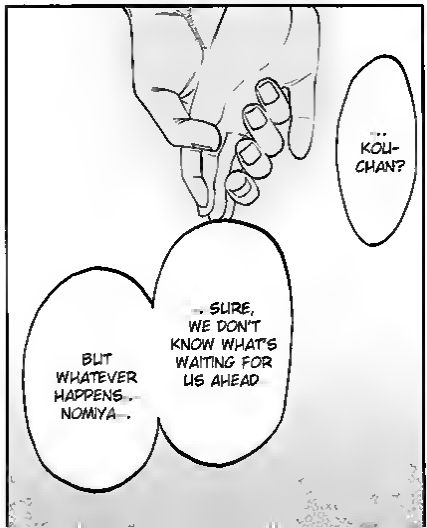
ERM...
WHAT CAN I SAY...
COME ON
YOU TOO, SUMI
AH...
ME TOO?!
I DIDN'T THINK I'D LIVE SUCH A THRILLING SCHOOL LIFE.
SO I SHOULD
THANK YOU TOO...
I GUESS?

OKAY
THIS IS WHERE WE PART
YEAH
LOTS OF STUFF HAPPENED BUT I CAN SAY
SHIMA
IT WAS A TON OF FUN!!
OVER!!

KOUSUKE, NOMIYA
I'LL ALSO SAY "THANK YOU".
I FEEL REALLY PROUD.
OKA
THOSE DAYS SPENT
WITH EVERYONE OF "SAKURA DISCORD"...
MAKE ME REALLY PROUD.

...YOU KNOW, NOMIYA...
.....

Uuuuuuh
うう
うう
OF COURSE I KNOW!!
NO NEED TO REMIND ME!!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO CRY NOW
WE'RE HAVING A GRADUATION PARTY RIGHT AFTER THIS

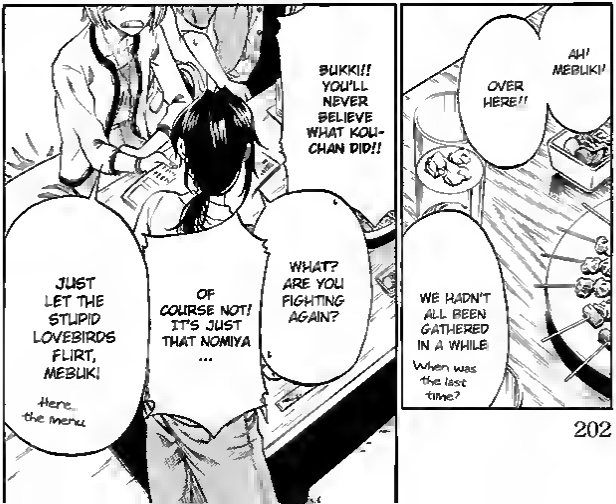

...KOU-CHAN?
...SURE, WE DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WAITING FOR US AHEAD
BUT WHATEVER HAPPENS...NOMIYA...

...I KNOW, ALREADY...
BUT STILL...

I'LL STAY BY YOUR SIDE.
WELL ...
THAT'S IF YOU DON'T MIND IT... OF COURSE.
KOU-CHAN?
YOU KNOW!!
WE WE'RE BOTH GONNA WORK RIGHT?
I'LL BE A FEW YEARS FROM NOW BUT...
ONCE WE HAVE SAVED ENOUGH MONEY...
Will ... you ...
Snap
MY, MY, SO THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU TWO ARE ALONE?

'THE HELL ARE YOU ALL DOING HERE?!!
I thought you'd gone home!
THE "PARTING WORDS" WERE MY IDEA, SO YOU SHOULD HAVE SUSPECTED AS MUCH.
SHIMA, DID YOU MANAGE TO TAKE IT?
SURE DID!! It's perfect!
NOW THAT'S A NICE PICTURE!! I'll use it as my stand by image!!
KOU-SUKE, KOU-SUKE
WHAT ?!
'I'll stay by your side."
PLEASE KILL ME!!
Err Listen... Kou-chan
Huh ?!
Damn you... I mean, you're right but still!

AH, YES!!
I'LL SHOW YOU YOUR TABLE


BUKKI!! YOU'LL NEVER BELIEVE WHAT KOU-CHAN DID!!
AH! MEBUKI! OVER HERE!!
WHAT? ARE YOU FIGHTING AGAIN?
OF COURSE NOT! IT'S JUST THAT NOMIYA ...
WE HADN'T ALL BEEN GATHERED IN A WHILE
When was the last time?
JUST LET THE STUPID LOVEBIRDS FLIRT, MEBUKI
Here, the menu

...IT'S OKA WHO MADE THE ARRANGEMENT, THIS TIME, I PRESUME?
? YES, IT WAS ME, SHIMA.
...YEAH, I KINDA FIGURED BY THE EMBARRASSING RESERVATION NAME...
...OKA, SORRY BUT I'M WITH HIM, HERE...
!?
...WHAT, SHIMA... SUMI... DO YOU HAVE ANY COMPLAINT?
RIGHT?! RIGHT, SHIMA-KOU?!
"THE SAKURA" IS SO MUCH BETTER ...
ARE YOU SERIOUSLY STILL ON THAT?!
LET'S START THE 36TH TEAM NAME MEETING!!
PEOPLE FOR "THE SAKURA", RAISE YOUR HAND!!
REJECTED
NO FREAKING WAY.
NAH ..
I'M AFRAID I HAVE TO DISAGREE
UNANIMOUS "NO"?!
NOMIYA... I'M SORRY," BUT...

For Sakura Discord
Right the sakuras are in full bloom right now.
How about we share a drink outside afterwards?
Oh, I'm for it.
Shima make a classy announcement or something.
Hey, you're asking me way too much!!
Okayyon.
Don't you like "THE Sakura"?
Sakura Discord...
The hell is this?
Our conversation topics haven't changed at all since high school
Ouch!
What was that for?!
4/11(土) 21:07
SAKURA DISCORD
END

STAFF。

・アクツ さん

・シゲエダヨシオさん

・秋明菊(しゅうめいぎく) さん

・鈴木靖淳(すずきせいじゅん)さん

担当：武川さん

この場をお借りして
感謝の意を。
本当に、本、当に
ありがとうございました!!

KSHAAH
Thus ends the tale of the "Sakura". This story managed to take shape in great part thanks to all the people who were involved with it, and you, who are holding this book. Thank you so much!! And above all, thanks to all the "Sakura" who bore "Sakura Discord" on their shoulders.
Masuda Eiji